

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT
CONSOLIDATED FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER

The General Services Administration is currently considering construction of a Consolidated Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for the Department of Treasury at Beltsville, Maryland.

Background.

In April 1965, the Senate and House Public Works Committees approved a prospectus in the amount of \$1,349,000 for construction of a Special Purpose Training Center for the United States Secret Service. In reviewing the prospectus and subsequent requests for construction funds, the Bureau of the Budget became concerned about the overall training needs of the Secret Service and other Federal law enforcement agencies.

A study of these needs was conducted by the Bureau of the Budget, the Civil Service Commission and the Department of the Treasury. The study revealed the critical need for up-to-date training facilities. As a result, the Bureau of the Budget formed a committee to develop plans for a facility to provide the training required.

A second prospectus, estimated to cost \$18,073,000 was

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authorized construction of a Consolidated Federal Law Enforcement Training Center to house 750 resident students from 20 Federal agencies, including the Secret Service.

Subsequent to approval of this second prospectus, the Congress approved significant law enforcement personnel increases for all of the agencies involved. In view of this, the agencies were asked to re-examine their estimated training requirements with the result that the anticipated resident student/instructor body increased from 750 to an average of 2,500 over the next ten years. The facility currently under consideration will house this increased student population.

The facility will consist of an Administration Building (including Auditorium), a Dining Hall, Shops, a Physical Education Building, Dormitories, an Education Building, a Special Training Building, outdoor firing ranges, an outdoor Pursuit Driving Course, and other related structures.

It will have a total net area of approximately 750,000 square feet located on a 491 acre site just northeast of the junction of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and Powder Mill Road.

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Building heights will vary from one to possibly seven stories in height and probably be of reinforced concrete framing with precast concrete exterior.

Water and sewerage service will be provided by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. A central gas heating and air-conditioning plant will be provided.

There is a possibility that a lake will be developed on the site for recreational and firefighting purposes.

Site Selection.

A majority of the agents who will train at the Center are located in the Washington, D.C. area. For this reason and because many of the agents are subject to short-notice recall to duty, a site in the immediate vicinity of Washington, D.C., was considered mandatory.

In developing the Secret Service Training Center Prospectus, General Services Administration conducted a study of available locations of Government-owned property in the Washington area and furnished the following sites as possibilities:

1. U.S. Navy Antenna Site, Hybla Valley, Virginia
2. National Training School for Boys, Washington, D.C.
3. Agriculture Research Center, Beltsville, Maryland

Each site was reviewed for existing conditions existed at

Hybla Valley such as proposed school buildings, right of

way for a future express highway and the marshy nature of the land.

The National Training School site at that time was not thought to be available in time for construction proposed and was also considered to be too valuable and controversial a property.

Sufficient land, approximately 60 acres, was immediately available at the Agriculture Research Center, Beltsville, Maryland. The location was ideal in that agents assigned to protective details could be quickly recalled from a training status for immediate duty in event of an emergency.

The Secret Service expressed a preference for the Beltsville site and General Services Administration considered the land available as adequate for construction of the Secret Service Training Center.

Since the Secret Service training facilities were incorporated into the revised prospectus and since the Department of Agriculture indicated that sufficient additional Government-owned land adjacent to the 60-acre tract could be made available for the Consolidated Center, a joint General Services Administration-Treasury Department decision was made to develop the Consolidated Center at Beltsville.

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Site Description

The Beltsville site consists of approximately 491 acres located about 4½ miles north of the Capital Beltway. It is bordered on the west by the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, on the north and east by the proposed outer beltway and on the south by Powder Mill Road. Nearly 60% of the boundaries are proposed or actual major freeways. The southern boundary, Powder Mill Road, is not designated for future expansion except as may be required to serve the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and other Department of Agriculture facilities to the east and south.

South of the site is a Department of Agriculture Animal Research Station. To the east is the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. A privately owned apartment complex is located north of the site.

The land is gently rolling. The great majority of the site is heavily wooded with second growth soft and hardwoods. Most of the trees are immature but areas of good mature hardwoods are to be found. Portions of the site have been used for silviculture by the Department of Agriculture.

Direct vehicular access to the site can be had only from Powder Mill Road which has an interchange with the

Probable Impact on the Environment.

The Potomac River, Rock Creek and the network of streams flowing into the Anacostia River form the three major green corridors coming into the District and provide the city's major recreational areas. The planned development of this 191 acre site will allow retention of two important stream valleys and green areas which are important links in one of these corridors coming into the city along the Anacostia River. The two stream valleys considerably enhance the site and will be disturbed as little as possible. These together with existing wooded areas divide the site into three distinct units.

The Pursuit Driving Range will be situated in the north-central portion of the property where the largest cleared area is available. This will obviate the need for clearing a heavily wooded area and will also contribute toward preservation of the two stream valleys. In providing expansion areas for the foreseeable future, removal of existing tree cover has been held to a minimum. Ultimate expansion areas as well as permanent green areas have been delineated in the process of master planning.

A major buffer of trees will be retained along the proposed beltway toward the eastern part of the campus. Extensive areas within the campus will remain undisturbed and will

form a series of connected parks. Retention of large green areas within the site will help to relate it to the major park and recreation areas bordering the streams leading into the Anacostia River.

Heavy stress has been placed on retaining the natural character of the site so as to provide a park-like setting for the completed Center.

Probable Adverse Environmental Effects.

The proposed construction at Beltsville will result in minimal adverse environmental effects.

Since the Special Training Building will be completed before water and sewage are available on the site, a well and a septic tank system will be provided to accommodate the estimated building population of approximately 180 people. It is estimated that the well and the septic tank system will be in operation for up to five years.

Heat for the entire facility will be generated by gas-fired boilers; cooling will be generated by gas absorption units or by electrically operated compressors.

Operation of the Center will not cause any major impact on traffic patterns in the area. An analysis to this effect

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was recently conducted by the National Park Service.

Interstate Route 1-95 paralleling the Baltimore-Washington Parkway will be completed prior to construction of the Center. Completion of I-95 is expected to take a considerable amount of traffic from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. All interstate traffic and local north-south traffic west of US Route 1 is expected to be diverted to I-95 considerably reducing the traffic flow on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

The training center will have its own internal road system so that traffic generated as a result of training center functions should not interfere with surrounding road systems. Most students will be required to live on the site during periods of instruction thus preventing a daily arrival and departure of traffic during rush hours.

The major adverse environmental effects will be (1) the reduction of tree cover on the site, and (2) soil erosion during construction. Approximately 5 to 10% of the site will be covered with construction or paving thus reducing the ability of the site to absorb rainfall. However, this will be offset by a storm-water drainage system to catch excess runoff and also by the presence of the proposed lake which will assist in impounding this runoff.

completion of construction. During construction such problems will exist but silt impoundment areas will be incorporated into the specifications for construction to insure that erosion problems are reduced to a minimum.

Studies are being made on water supply, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, storm water drainage, erosion control, both during construction and permanent, types of fuels, etc., so that the final solution for all of these considerations and many other special problems will meet the most recent criteria on environmental quality.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action.

Use of Police Academies and University Police Science Courses

Consideration was given to the possible use of State and local police academies or university courses in police science. However, this was not considered practicable because:

1. The focus of the police academies and university police science courses is to provide training in police operations at the local level which is of little interest to the Federal Agent.

2. The Federal agencies cannot exercise control or direction over the conduct of the training, the subject

matter, length of courses or instruction methods. They can only give advice or make requests.

3. Much of the Federal Agent's training requirement is in special subjects pertaining to the functions of his agency or additional training in depth in particular subjects. These subjects are of little or no interest to the local police officer.

In summary, use of this approach would mean that an agency would scatter its new agents to basic training courses around the country, with no assurance that they would receive comparable training. Part of the training would not even be applicable to their jobs.

Establishment of Individual Agency Training Centers

This would entail development of improved training programs by each agency working independently and the utilization of several small facilities. However, none of the agencies could economically utilize such a minimum individual facility. Even the largest would have unused facilities for significant periods of time.

Federal Regional Training Centers

The establishment of regional Federal training centers was also considered, but quickly discarded. The establishment of regional centers containing optimum facilities and staffing would create a redundancy of resources. The basic facility

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and small regional size, could only be partially utilized. In addition, the specialized training would often have small splinter groups to make up classes because of the small size of each of the law enforcement groups and the extensive dispersion of the agents throughout the country. Sometimes this would result in two or three trainees per agency per region for a particular class.

The problems of uniformity of training among and between groups of agents, curriculum content, scheduling and class composition would be multiplied by the number of regions. The Federal law enforcement agencies are, for the most part, national in nature. Their training should, therefore, be conducted on a National basis.

Long Term Effect on the Environment.

In the opinion of GSA, Chloethal Woodard Smith and Associated Architects (the contract architect for this project), and Messrs. Koubek, Vosbeck and Elden (members of the GSA Architectural Advisory Review Panel), construction of the CLETC at the Beltsville Site will represent an asset to the long-term development in the Beltsville area because of the large green areas to be retained.

The site is currently heavily wooded with some cleared areas and contains two small streams eventually flowing into the Anacostia River. Development of the site as planned will take advantage of the few cleared areas to the maximum extent possible in siting permanent facilities. Clearing of the land will be held to a minimum and additional plantings will be made to provide visual screening of the total facility and also to provide acoustical separation not only of the various parts of total facility but also acoustical separation of the total facility from the surrounding roads and other future development.

The two stream valleys will be retained. The overall site could be considerably enhanced if plans to dam these streams and create a lake for firefighting and recreational purposes are further developed.

The completed facility will appear as a large wooded area when viewed from outside the site. Although the student population will be constantly in flux, a constant coming and going of vehicular traffic will be minimized in that students will reside at the Center. Once enrolled, the students will remain on the site for a maximum of 18 weeks.

Construction of the Center at this location will also preclude usage of the land for other commercial or

residential development which could require more intensive
land clearing and detriment to the overall environment.

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Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.

Approximately 61 acres of the total site is already under development. Construction amounting to \$770,000 for outdoor firing ranges and related facilities is already complete.

A second contract with an estimated cost of \$930,000 is scheduled for award in September, 1970. This later contract is also for construction of outdoor firing ranges and related facilities.

Design contracts totaling \$292,000 have been awarded for design of two buildings and for development of a Master Plan for the Center. All of this amounts to a total investment to date of approximately \$1,992,000 including the contract scheduled for award in September, 1970.